

171 measure; so that the Seri frenzy is at once more instinctive and more  
 726 condition among most of their contemporaries. Accordingly the war  
 customs, like several other features of the tribe, seem to afford a connecting link between the habits normal to carnivorous beasts and the well-organized war customs of somewhat higher culture-grades; and thus they contribute toward outlining the course of human development through some of its darker stages.

712 Conformably with their poverty in offensive devices, the Seri are exceedingly poor in devices for defense. It is an impressive fact that a restricted motherland which has been successfully protected against invasion for nearly four centuries of history should be destitute of earthworks, fortifications, barricades, palisades, or other protective structures; yet no such structures exist on any of the natural lines of approach, and none are known anywhere in Seriland save in a single spot—Tinaja Trinchera—where there are a few walls of loose-laid stone, so unlike anything else in Seriland and so like the structures characteristic of Papagueria as to strongly indicate (if not to demonstrate) invasion and temporary occupancy by aliens. The jacales are not fortified in the slightest degree, unless the turtle-shells with which they are sometimes shingled be regarded as armor; even the most ancient rancherías are absolutely devoid of contravallations of earth, stone, or other material; and both the structures themselves and the expressions of the folk concerning them indicate that the jacales are not regarded as fortresses or places of refuge against enemies, but only as comfortable lodges for use in times of peace. Nor are walls like those of the borderland Tinaja Trinchera known in the interior of the tribal territory—e. g., the similarly conditioned Tinaja Anita, which differs only in the greater abundance and permanence of the water-supply, is entirely devoid of artificial structures, not even a pebble or boulder being artificially placed save perchance by the casual trampling of the pathways. As already noted, the Seri seem to be practically devoid of knife-sense; they are still more completely devoid of fort-sense, although (and evidently because) they rely so fully on natural things, including tutelaries and their own fleetness, for safety.

713 Although devoid of even the germ of fortification-sense, so far as can be discovered, the Seri are not without a sort of shield-sense, which is of much significance partly by reason of its inchoate character. The ordinary shield is a pelican pelt, or a robe or kilt comprising several skins; it is employed either for confusing the enemy by swift brandishing, something after the fashion of the caps of the banderilleros in the bull ring, or for actual protection of the body against arrows and other missiles or weapons. So far as known it is not backed or otherwise strengthened, the user relying solely on the stout integument and thick feathers—or rather on the mystical properties imputed to the pelt as the mystery-tinged investiture of their chief creative tutelary.

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